establishments to organize discussions through Seminars/Workshops/ Symposium on the subject of "Media Ethics: Fetters or Freedom", considered as being of vital importance and relevance in present times.

Urdu channel launch by Doordarshan

2043. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Urdu channel would be launched;

(b) the steps taken to make Urdu channel of Doordarshan a success;

(c) the number of persons recruited for the new Urdu channel;

(d) whether Doordarshan has held meetings with Urdu scholars, educationists, poets, writers, film personalities to make a success of this channel; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (e) Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan's Urdu channel is likely to go on air in the middle of 2006. Preparatory action is underway to finalise matters relating, *inter-alia,* to putting in place the requisite infrastructure, the format and content of the channel along with the requisite personnel. So far, no recruitment has been made for the new Urdu channel. No need has been felt for such interaction at the present juncture.

Extra working days in Supreme Court and High Courts

2044. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble President has suggested to work on Saturdays and Sundays to reduce the pendency of cases in High Courts and the Supreme Court;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal before Government to make it mandatory for Supreme Court and High Courts to work on Saturdays and Sundays at least, till the pendency is cleared; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) to (c) Though suggestions for increasing the working days and working hours of the Supreme Court and High Courts

have been made in different fora, the working days in the Supreme Court and High Courts are regulated by the rules framed by the respective Courts. According to available information, the Supreme Court of India works for 222 days in a year; all High Courts in the country normally have 210 working days in a year.

The Department of Justice had, in the year 2002-2003, examined the matter of increasing the number of working days in Courts. In view of the urgent need of the hour to reduce the huge pendencies prevailing in the High Courts, this Department addressed to all the High Courts, requesting them to fix the period of vacations in such a way that the number of working days of High Courts generally do not fall below 222 days in a year.

Various other steps have been taken by the Government to expedite disposal of cases, these include periodically monitoring the pendency position in courts, grouping of cases involving common question of law, constitution of specialized benches, timely filling up the vacancies of judges, increasing the judge strength, organizing Lok Adalats at regular intervals, encouraging alternative modes of disputes resolution like negotiation, mediation and arbitration and setting up of special tribunals like Central Administrative Tribunals, State Administrative Tribunals, Income Tax Appellate Tribunals, Family Courts, Labour Courts, etc., establishing Fast Track Courts, and computerization of courts.

Vacant posts of Notary public in Tamil Nadu

2045. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of posts of Notary Public are lying vacant in various courts of Tamil Nadu as on date;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill-up those vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) No specific number of Notaries to be appointed for each Court situated in a District in the State of Tamil Nadu has been fixed either under the Notaries Act, 1952 or under rules made thereunder.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.